

Gustavus Disposal & Recycling Center (DRC) Quarterly Staff Report

Paul Berry, DRC Manager/ Operator

Monday, August 8th, 2016

My last quarterly report was the May 9th General Meeting. My next scheduled quarterly report is during the November 14th, 2016 General Meeting.

Operations and management

Labor

The [DRC's labor] pool is cool. Having a pool of individuals to draw from over the course of the summer makes it much easier to keep up with peak waste flows, have an occasional replacement for myself or Jeff so we can have a life outside of work and also makes for a more robust labor situation for the City. July is peak month and a lot of waste flows through the facility on a daily basis. Three or four bales of smelly non-recyclable waste per day is typical whereas in the winter zero to two bales is more common. Thank you to Artemis BonaDea for volunteering on Fridays for a few hours between her Pool hires. Thank you to Chris Smith for his welding work replacing a wear plate on the GAME H100VT glass pulverizer.

The compost scene

In late May it finally it stopped raining enough to dry out the composting yard and I was able to screen all the compost generated last winter and this spring – three large piles. However as the rains return now I am again reminded that improving the composting yard: creating a hard working surface that drains, is essential to be able to continue to use it into the fall and next spring. This summer has seen two major repairs to the Trom screener - the shaft seals for both hydraulic motors failed and had to be shipped to Juneau for repairs. The screener was purchased in 2005 and while it is working well the entire machine needs to be painted to control rust. This is a challenge with the lack of covered work space at the DRC.

The amount of food waste that the DRC is composting has dropped from previous years – private composters and a hog farmer are diverting food waste from some local businesses that used to deliver to the DRC. I have no problem with this and I can understand why it occurs – the food waste is taken for free and in some cases is picked up by the processor. This lower volume of food waste has allowed for a reduced processing schedule of mixing food waste once per week during the summer rather than twice per week. Less screening is also needed. The Park delivered several dump truck loads of ground-up wood generated by their stump grinder. I have found that when this material is mixed with the larger wood chips (added for porosity – keeping the piles aerobic) there is less odor associated with the composting process.

I look forward to receiving hands on training at a facility in the lower 48 (still deciding which one) to learn more about large scale food waste composting. I am indebted to the Council for the support for my training in the current operating budget.

Community Chest

Since my last report in early May: at the front desk is Mary Williams on Wednesdays; Liz Vanderzanden, Maribeth Jarvis, Betsy Lesh, Judy Brakel and Annie Mackovjak on Saturdays and finally Sandy Hancock and Mary Coster on Monday evenings. Our sorters have been Betsy, Bonnie Niemi, Artemis BonaDea, Meadow Brook, Annie, Denise Pratschner, Kim Ney, BJ Robinson, Ilana Guttmann & Freya Doyle.

Bonnie has done a great job with “301” (the small outbuilding) and the main store has been

transformed with new boxes and displays and this has also boosted our sales. Annie is our groundskeeper who keeps up with the grass and weeds. I would also like to thank Jack and Jim Lesh for repairing the gate, office stairs and other improvement projects at the Chest. My listing of names is based on the volunteer hours write downs sheet and I apologize if I have missed any people. Thanks must also go to the people of Gustavus who continue to donate good, re-salable material.

A lot of clothing, dishes, toys, furniture, building materials, books, puzzles, games, footwear etc. flow through the Chest and it is only with a constant labor force sorting, purging, stocking and selling that we as a community can benefit from such fine thrift store. For the City and the DRC this results in a gross of over \$12,000 raised annually in the past two fiscal years. As a way of saying thank you to the volunteers for all their hard work I organized a dinner for them at the Clove Hitch on August 4th. There was 17 volunteers (summer and winter crowd), myself and two spouses. It is a diverse group of women who run the Chest and we are all indebted to them for giving us such a thriving thrift store.

Regional issues: Southeast Alaska Solid Waste Authority (SEASWA) & Juneau

Nothing to report – it is difficult to partake in the monthly SEASWA teleconferences which are on times when the facility is open and we need the phone for credit card payments and other uses. I do read the minutes and will resume calling in this fall and winter.

No developments with the Juneau recycling pilot project since my last report. However I continue to communicate with Jim Penor on regional solid waste issues.

Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP)

This important topic will be covered in greater detail later in the meeting along with the presentation of my report of the what happened during the first two years and what I hope to accomplish in the next two years. Please refer to the report: “What was done in FY2015 - FY2016 (the first two years) Goals for FY2017 – FY2018 (the next two years)”.

<http://cms.gustavus-ak.gov/government/committees/disposal-recycling-center/Planning/CY2016-DRC%20SWMP-extension-summary.pdf>

Capital Projects

Skid-Steer Loader Replacement

I am very grateful to the Council for your support of the purchase of the Bobcat A770 All Wheel Steer loader from Bobcat of Juneau LLC. The new machine should be arriving in Gustavus in late August. At present I am proposing that the City keep the older 763 skid-steer loader as backup however it has some maintenance issues and will probably need the replacement of its radiator as well a more thorough maintenance overhaul to maintain its reliability.

Pre-processing storage area, driveway and site improvements

During my last report I submitted to the Council a link for the scoping document associated with this project. As the Council gets on its feet with Capital project planning process I hope you will review this project. I am re-submitting a scoping document and two diagrams for this project located within this folder on the City's web site:

<http://cms.gustavus-ak.gov/government/committees/disposal-recycling-center/reports/reports-to-the-city-council/2016/pre-processing-storage-area-driveway-and-site-improvements-scoping-documents>

At this point in time the costs are estimated as:

SUB-PROJECT Driveway improvements	\$10,000
SUB-PROJECT Pre-processing storage area	\$26,400
SUB-PROJECT Storage bins & pallet jack	\$18,000
SUB-PROJECT Tree Planting & Misc. Earthwork	\$ 3,300

As I stated in my last report I would ask that the Council give some time to the Pre-processing storage area, driveway and site improvements project and consider approving or editing and approving the scoping document that I am presenting.

Compost yard improvements

This project which consists of removing the top 6-12" of soil from the yard, adding new pit-run material to create a graded surface for proper runoff and final a cap of 6"-8" D-1 to harden the working surface. I am also proposing certain areas to be concrete to further control damage to the dirt surface from rain and use of the loader. Still working on a scoping document for this project. Rough estimates for repairing and rebuilding the yard vary from \$11,300 to over \$48,000 depending on the amount of concrete used.

Landfill mound building

In previous reports I have talked about how our non-recyclable waste is now being added to mound rather than going into the ground as it was in the beginning of our operation. This mound needs to be engineered to avoid potentially costly future problems such as instability and odor. There is also a certain amount of risk inherent with an unlined landfill in a high groundwater environment and that risk increases with the volume of waste landfilled. A full on topographic survey of the 12 acre property will probably be quite expensive and expensive projects tend to get put off so I would like to figure out how to do as much of the work in-house as possible. Volume measurements could be done with the renting or purchasing of a site level, taking measurements and performing some math. I would also like to propose a small ~\$2,000 purchase order for approximately 12 hours work for the Roger North/ Vista Consultants, (the landfill engineer I worked with on the SWMP last year), to work with me on the project.

Speaking in Anchorage

On Wednesday of this week I will be traveling to Anchorage to speak at the Integrated and Solid Waste Management and Composting Training held by the Zender Environmental Health and Research Group in Anchorage. All travel costs are covered by Zender and I typically receive a speakers fee that I donate to DRC. This is the 5th year I have been invited to speak at their training. This teaching opportunity has helped me develop a presentation of our facility and provides me with an opportunity to tour solid waste and recycling facilities in the Anchorage and Palmer area.

The end, thank you.

Report compiled by PNB on 08/05/16

Minor edits 08/09/16